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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2244
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0414
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM ALT SHAPE BE PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0368

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 001073

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [NATO](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: GREECE/AFGHANISTAN: STILL CONSIDERING A POSSIBLE
PRT

REF: A. STATE 19516
[1](#)B. ATHENS 323

Classified By: A/POL COUNSELOR JEFF HOVENIER. REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Ambassador Heracles Asteriades, Director of the MFA D-2 Directorate for the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO) and the Western European Union (WEU), told A/Pol Counselor and Poloff that Greece continues to evaluate the U.S. request that it lead a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan (Ref B). Asteriades noted that senior levels of the Greek government continue to look at ways Greece could further contribute in Afghanistan, noting that PM Karamanlis had said at the NATO Bucharest Summit that Greece was reviewing how it could further support the ISAF mission. Asteriades added that he personally has been pressing the issue of a Greek-led PRT within MFA and with MOD.

[1](#)2. (C) Asteriades said that although the U.S. had asked Greece to consider leading a PRT in the Dai Kundi province, it is becoming clear to Greece that Dai Kundi poses significant logistical challenges, note its isolation and lack of an airstrip. Asteriades added, however, that Greece is now also looking carefully at the Samangan province, which "appears to be more doable." Asteriades said he has been talking to Italian, Czech, Austrian, and French colleagues to obtain additional information on both areas, but asserted that Samangan is a much more likely place for any possible Greek PRT, adding that even in Samangan, Greece would need logistical and security support. Finally, Asteriades said that the Greek MOD is adamant that it cannot spare any additional forces for overseas missions, so any military forces devoted to a PRT in Afghanistan would have to be taken from existing Greek forces in ISAF or in KFOR. Asteriades concluded by emphasizing that this issue remains under review, that no decision has yet been taken, but that he is pressing to have a positive decision on an Afghanistan PRT - most likely in Samangan.

[1](#)3. (C) A/Political Counselor responded that we understood that a Dai Kundi PRT remains a high priority, but that we are unaware of any effort by international actors in Afghanistan to press for a PRT in Samangan, and that Greece could make a more meaningful contribution in Dai Kundi. However, he added that we would carefully review any Greek proposal to lead a PRT in Afghanistan and would welcome an expanded Greek role in Afghanistan, particularly any role in which Greek forces deployed beyond the current Kabul-only regional caveat.
(Note: We are following up with MOD to determine their

thinking on any Greek-led PRT in Afghanistan. End Note).

SPECKHARD